

Remarks

Status of Claims

Claims 1-9 were pending in this application at the time of the outstanding Office Action. Claims 1-9 are cancelled. New claims 10-15 are presented in this amendment for examination.

Drawings

Fig. 7 has been amended to reference Fig. 7A and Fig. 7B since there are two flowcharts shown in the figure. The written description has been amended accordingly. This change was confirmed to comply with the drawing objection as stated in paragraph 3 of the outstanding office action by telephone voice mail exchanges with the examiner.

Applicant has amended paragraph 3 of the specification, replacing the reference to Figure 1 with a reference to Figure 21. As amended, paragraph 3 solely refers to an illustration of prior art. Applicant has amended Figure 21 to include labels to which paragraph 3 refers. In light of these amendments, Applicant submits that Figure 1 is properly designated.

Specification Objections

The above amendments to paragraph 3 of the specification overcome all but two of the objections noted by the Examiner. The last two objections are overcome by Applicant's amendments to paragraphs 7 and 43, respectively.

Claim Objections

Applicant submits that objections to claim 1 are no longer applicable, as the claim is cancelled.

Rejections Under § 112

In response to the noted rejections, Applicant has cancelled claims 1-9 and presents in this amendment new claims 10-15 for examination. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 10-15 fully comply with the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Rejections Under § 103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 1-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kitabayashi et. al., U.S. Patent No. 5,920,858, in view of Cheng, U.S. Patent No. 6,067,548. Applicant respectfully submits that the new claims 10-15 presented in this amendment are patentable under § 103(a) over these references.

For example, claim 10 recites an enterprise information filtering system that includes:

an organization definition information storage unit that stores organization definition information, which includes information regarding layers of a multi-layered structure of an enterprise, including names of the layers, positions of the layers with respect to other layers and names of persons assigned to the layers and additional information regarding the persons, including management responsibilities

and

filter definition information generating means for: identifying a type of information requested by a user of the enterprise information filtering system; correlating the type of information requested by a user of the enterprise information filtering system with a type of organization definition information stored in the organization definition information storage unit; and combining the type of information requested by a user of the enterprise information filtering system and the correlated type of organization definition information to create a filtering condition to be used by the enterprise information filtering system[.]

As also recited in claim 10, the enterprise information filtering system uses the filtering condition to build a filter by which information “pertaining to the request by the user” and “regarding only the user and persons directly and indirectly managed by the user” is

retrieved. Claim 11 depends from claim 10. The construction of claims 12-13 and of claims 14-15 parallel that of claims 10-11.

The Office Action concedes that Kitabayashi does not explicitly teach that its filtering system is an enterprise filtering system. The Office Action relies on Cheng as teaching an organizational database that supports collaborative computing in a global enterprise. Even accepting this view for the sake of argument, however, the isolated teaching of such a database fails to teach, describe or suggest the other limitations of the invention, noted above, that are absent from Kitabayashi. Accordingly, the cited combination fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. Allowance of new claims 10-15 is therefore respectfully requested.

For the above reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the Patent and Trademark Office has not made out a *prima facie* case of obviousness under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 103 regarding the cancelled claims 1-9 and that claims 10-15 are in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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